

## The Kings by flippyspoon

**Series:** Pour Some Sugar on Me [14]

**Category:** Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** M/M

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Billy Hargrove, Steve Harrington

**Relationships:** Billy Hargrove/Steve Harrington

**Status:** Completed

**Published:** 2018-02-19

**Updated:** 2018-02-19

**Packaged:** 2022-04-21 15:08:53

**Rating:** Teen And Up Audiences

**Warnings:** No Archive Warnings Apply

**Chapters:** 1

**Words:** 2,695

**Publisher:** archiveofourown.org

**Summary:**

Billy was still catching his breath when Steve stretched, feeling sated and happy and said, “Oh yeah, so I’m going to prom.”

Billy’s cigarette had fallen out of his mouth. “Huh? With who?”

“Amy,” Steve muttered, rubbing his eyes. “She didn’t have a date. She asked.”

“Amy,” Billy repeated, mouth twisting as he lit his cigarette. “Didn’t you bang Amy a couple times?”

## The Kings

Sometimes Steve really was stupid.

Billy was still catching his breath when Steve stretched, feeling sated and happy and said, “Oh yeah, so I’m going to prom.”

Billy’s unlit cigarette had fallen out of his mouth. “Huh? With who?”

“Amy,” Steve muttered, rubbing his eyes. “She didn’t have a date. She asked.”

“Amy,” Billy repeated, mouth twisting as he lit his cigarette. “Didn’t you bang Amy a couple times?”

“Pft. Yeah, a million years ago.”

Billy took a drag and said, “Great.” Then he put his jeans on in angry fashion, grimacing and puffing.

“You..have a problem with this,” Steve surmised.

“Nah, it’s fine. Go to fucking prom with fucking Amy.”

“Whoa whoa!” Steve sat up. “It’s not like a real date or something. I mean obviously-”

“What the hell do you even care about prom anyway!” Billy said, throwing on his t-shirt and smoothing back his hair.

True, the prom was all anybody could talk about, including Nancy, since the thing was combined for juniors and seniors. Both Billy and Steve had been nominated for prom king too along with four other guys. But Steve just didn’t have any space in his head left for high school shit these days. Especially when he couldn’t enjoy it with his boyfriend. He’d said as much. So it probably did come as a surprise.

“I *don’t* but Nancy said I should go-” He shut his mouth and closed his eyes.

“Nancy,” Billy said slowly. “Oh. Nancy said. Okay. Got it.”

“Billy-”

“Nah, this is fantastic. You’re still taking her orders. Invite me to the wedding.”

“If I could take *you*, of course I would-”

Billy grabbed his boots and his jacket and said, “Go fuck yourself, Harrington.”

The door slammed and Steve winced hearing Billy pound down the stairs and flopped on his back and covered his eyes.

“Shit.”

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Prom was only a week away and Steve could not get Billy alone anywhere. He was being iced.

He did find Amy alone after school by her locker.

“What if uh, what if I found you another prom date?” Steve said, chewing on his lip as Amy glared up at him. “It’s not like you’re into me or something.”

“No, it’s not,” Amy had said sternly.

“Right! So-”

“Like who?” Amy said. “We already have the tickets and the limo which we’re sharing with Nancy and Jonathan so you better have somebody good if you’re ditching me one *week* from prom, Steve Harrington!”

He did not have somebody good. Everybody good already had a date.

“Well...” Steve cleared his throat. “There’s Keith.”

“Who the hell is Keith?”

“Um, he’s a junior, he uh...” Steve mumbled, “Works at the arcade?”

“Keith!” Amy said. “Keith from The Palace? Cheeto-fingers? You have

got to be kidding. You are *taking* me to prom, Steve! So just suck it up!" She spun around, her long blonde hair flipping in his face.

"Yep," Steve said, resigned to the fate of going to prom with a girl who obviously hated him now while also pissing off his boyfriend.  
"Yep yep."

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Steve couldn't call Billy's house because that was always dicey but he left about ten notes in Billy's locker and then watching him crumple them up and throw them away.

Billy wouldn't even look at him.

It made Steve *miserable*.

They'd been doing so well. Things had only just become *real*. Billy had just started using the word "boyfriend," curling up against Steve, opening up about shit, which was something Steve hadn't even known he wanted.

*I fucked up. I know that. I should have at least asked you what you thought. I'm sorry. I love you.*

It didn't matter. Billy wasn't reading the notes.

He *should* have realized Billy would be upset though. Billy got upset about lots of things like the way they had to be careful and how afraid he was that his father would find out. He got pissed sometimes at the sight of happy young couples canoodling in public. All that was tangled up in Steve voluntarily going to prom with a girl, he now realized.

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On prom night Steve put on his tux and because he had the money for something nice, it looked good. He didn't spend nearly as much time as he usually did if he was going out with Billy but he was certainly presentable. With a sigh, he grabbed the corsage he'd bought for Amy and reported to his mother in the living room who had wanted to see him out. She cooed over him for a couple annoying minutes, which Steve found almost baffling. It was more

attention than she'd given him in the last year.

The limo honked and Steve trotted out, carrying the corsage.

The next stop would be Amy's house. Nancy and Jonathan were already in the car.

It wasn't a very nice limo, but Steve hadn't cared about that. He'd ponied up more than his share, suspecting Byers would have trouble just paying for his tux rental.

There was something surreal about the whole thing.

A year ago he was fantasizing about this moment. He'd rent the best limo he could find. He'd buy an ostentatious corsage for Nancy and maybe a flashy necklace too. They'd dance together and Nancy would beam up at him and tell him she loved him. Letting go of all that had been painful.

Now there was Billy who was so entirely different and who had become so incredibly important and he was not talking to Steve and Steve didn't know what to do and he coughed now as he sat back in the limo and ignored the lump in his throat as Nancy and Jonathan chattered and they pulled up to Amy's house.

When the limo stopped, Nancy nudged his elbow. "Hey. You have to go to her door, ya know."

"Oh. Right."

At Amy's door, Steve knocked and Amy and her parents answered.

Steve smiled tightly, not hiding his displeasure.

She looked nice anyway, in a pink satin gown.

Amy was bright and happy with her parents, who were delighted at the sight of Steve and the corsage and told him how handsome he was. When the door shut, Amy's grin slipped and she eyed him, suspicious. "Thanks for the corsage," she said.

"You're wel-"

“Whatever. Let’s go.”

Amy dutifully ignored Steve which he was only too happy about though Nancy kept trying to cheer him up. He shook her off, preferring to wallow. At the prom, Steve sat slumped at the table and sipped punch and watched his classmates happily dancing in their formal wear.

Then Billy walked in.

He was with Samantha, with big hair and a purple dress, who almost immediately walked away from him as they approached a table, rolling her eyes at a group of girls by the punch as if to say “this guy.”

Billy looked beautiful.

He’d gotten his hair cut a little, his blonde wavy locks slicked on the sides and making his sharp jawline stand out and his eyes sparkle. He looked like a damn movie star even in his barely knotted black tie under a black leather jacket. He glanced over at Steve and his brow turned down as he turned his head just as quickly. He sat down at Tommy’s table and didn’t even try to hide the flask before taking a sip. Tommy hissed at him and made him put it away and Billy scoffed.

Steve sat at his table, staring at Billy who kept glancing back at him. He did this for a good hour before Amy tugged at his sleeve.

“Nancy says you’re miserable and I should dance with you at least once, so c’mon.”

“Tell Nancy, I’m fine. Thanks. Bye.” Steve decided he should probably not be taking Nancy’s advice anymore. It had not worked well so far.

“You know,” Amy said, “we *could* have had a nice time but first you want to cancel and then you act like going to prom with me is the worst day of your life! What is your problem, Steve!”

“My problem?” Steve burst out, jumping to his feet. “My problem is I *can’t* be with the person I want to be with and I fucked up!”

“Well, whose fault is that?” Amy said.

“Everybody’s but his!” Steve snarled, shoving cups off the table and sending punch and ice to the gym floor.

Steve spun around and there Billy was, his expression ambiguous as he stood dumbly just off the dance floor gaping. Steve sniffed and stalked off to the boy’s locker room. He was *going* to start crying and he didn’t want to do it in front of everyone particularly since he might have just revealed he had a boyfriend.

Steve found a quiet corner in the locker room and untied his bow-tie as tears slid down his cheeks.

“Stupid fucking...goddammit...” He took his jacket off and threw it down and shoved a hand in his pocket. He leaned against the lockers, sniffling for a while, feeling stifled. He unbuttoned a couple of buttons and rolled up his sleeves. The music from the prom was just as clear in the locker room, the strains of Duran Duran’s “Rio” too loud.

“Hey.”

Steve turned around and Billy was there, hands in his pockets, smiling softly.

“You really know how to make a scene, pretty boy,” Billy said. “Lucky for you, nobody knows what the hell you were talking about. Byers is telling everybody you obviously meant to say hers. He’s not a bad liar.”

Billy was speaking to him, Billy was *speaking* to him!

“I’m sorry!” Steve said quickly, approaching Billy. “I’m so so sorry-”

“Yeah, I know. I...may have picked a few of your notes out of the trash.”

“Oh,” Steve ducked his head, not sure of himself.

“You look good, ya know,” Billy said.

Steve looked down at his disheveled shirt and undone tie. “Uh-”

“No, it’s just like I pictured,” Billy said. “Had this wild idea that we’d crash prom. Get wasted, get a little crazy. Go to the quarry... Dance there, just you and I... Moonlight, bottle of champagne. All that shit.”

“Billy.” Steve grinned and tipped his head. “You softy.”

“Hey, shut up,” Billy said, shifting on his feet, clearly a little embarrassed. “Besides, who doesn’t like dancing?”

Steve kicked Billy’s boot. “I love you. And I am sorry. I know you get pissed about the shit we can’t do and... I shouldn’t have...”

“Don’t have to cry about it, sweetheart,” Billy said, leaning in close to Steve. He reached up and wiped a tear away. “Not like I’m gonna ditch you over the fucking prom. I love you like crazy, Steve.”

Billy kissed him and Steve tugged him closer. Alphaville’s “Forever Young” came on and Steve whispered, “Dance with me now.”

“To this cheesy song?” Billy smirked against Steve’s cheek even as he slipped his arms around him.

They swayed there in the locker room, shoes squeaking on the floor, and nobody bothered them as they slow danced and kissed. Steve rested his hands on Billy’s shoulders, the leather warm under his fingertips.

“Would I have bought you a corsage in this scenario where I took you to prom?” Steve said, leaving a soft kiss at Billy’s neck.

“More like a pack of smokes, babe.”

“Yeah,” Steve said, chuckling. “Sounds about right.”

“Then I win prom king,” Billy says.

“Excuse me,” Steve said, raising his eyebrows. “We were both nominated if you hadn’t noticed.”

“Yeah, and I win in this scenario,” Billy said smugly. “Still might.”

“Well, I know I’m not going to,” Steve said wryly. It was something he might have expected a long time ago. It wasn’t now, not that he cared about shit like that anymore.

“You never know,” Billy said.

“So, are you saying I’m your prom *queen*?” Steve said.

“Nah, we’re both kings,” Billy said, tweaking Steve’s hips.

“I see.”

“Yeah, and when I win I go up there and put my smoke out on the stage and break a beer bottle.”

“Where’d you get this beer bottle?”

“It’s a fantasy, babe.”

“Uh oh,” Steve said, squinting. The song had ended. A teacher was speaking into a microphone.

“And now the moment you’ve all been waiting for...the announcements for your 1985 junior and senior prom king and queen... Let me just...”

“Your shot’s no better than mine by the way,” Steve said.

“So our queen,” teacher said, “is Vicky Anderson!”

There was some happy screaming and some music played and they heard Vicky giddily thanking everyone as people cheered and she was presumably crowned onstage.

“Excuse me,” Billy said. “Whattaya mean my shot’s no better than yours?”

“No, I mean you’re hot and the girls used to like you but then you stopped paying attention to them and everybody thinks you’re a dick-”

“I’m the star of the basketball team.”

“Oookay,” Steve said. They teased each other like this all the time. Often it led to some frisky sex.

The teacher said into the microphone as it thundered through the walls: “Now we have an unusual situation...”

“C’mon, you know it’s true,” Billy said.

“Okay fine. But you start fights all the time. They never give it to guys who start fights-”

“Okay, but who would win then? Tommy?”

“Ugh.”

“Well...”

The teacher said, “As it turns out...”

“Our school’s full of losers,” Steve said sadly.

“Except us,” Billy said, indignant.

“Yeah,” Steve said. “Except us.”

The teacher’s mic echoed. “We have a tie for king...”

“Ha!” Steve laughed. “That’s funny.”

“What if it was us?” Billy cackled into Steve’s shoulder. “Can you imagine, Harrington?”

The teacher said, “Your kings for 1985 are...”

“You’re *dreaming*,” Steve said.

“Billy Hargrove...and Steve Harrington!”

“WHAT!” Steve said.

“HOLY SHIT!” Billy burst out laughing and hugged Steve to him. His face was red he laughed so hard. “Holy shit, Steve!”

“Should we...go up there?”

The gym was in a kind of riot it sounded like. The teacher said, “So...where are our kings? STEVE HARRINGTON AND BILLY HARGROVE. Please come to the stage?”

There was a lot of commotion.

“Let’s do it!” Billy said, grabbing Steve’s hand. He stuck out his tongue and all but dashed to the door.

Steve trilled his lips and shook his head. “Oh man,” he muttered as they ran out to the gym. “Don’t break any beer bottles!”

When they appeared in the gym everyone cheered and Billy dragged Steve up to the stage, immediately grabbing the mic away from Mr. Fredericks, the chem teacher.

“WOOOOOOOO!” Billy howled. The crowd went wild as Mr. Fredericks set a somewhat cheap gold crown on Billy’s head and then Steve’s. Billy threw up horns with both hands. “ROCK AND ROOOOOLL!”

Steve snorted a laugh and Billy shoved the mic in his hands. “Ah, thanks!” Steve said. “Congratulations, Vicky!”

Vicky was leaning down to laugh and talk to her friends, not particularly interested in either of them but she threw Steve a thumbs up, the tiara sparkling on her head.

Steve said into the mic, “Um...”

Billy was grinning and Steve took a breath and said, “WOOOOOO!”

“YEAAAAAH!” Billy said. The crowd cheered and hooted.

“Anyway,” Steve said to the mass of Hawkins High students and teachers. “We gotta another prom to go to so see ya later, Tigers!”

He shoved the mic back at Mr. Fredericks and grabbed Billy’s hand again, dragging him from the stage as the crowd looked on, somewhat baffled now. They had to shove their way through the

crowd and throw out some high fives but finally they were outside alone, running to the Camaro, hand in hand, their crowns perched precariously on their heads.

“KING BILLYYYYY!” Steve hooted.

“KING STEEEEEVE!”

Behind the wheel, Billy hollered as he revved up the car and Steve threw an arm around him. Now his tears were ones of laughter as they peeled out of the lot.

“We going to the quarry?” Steve said, and went to tongue kissing Billy’s neck.

“Fuck yeah, baby. I bought champagne three months ago. It’s in the trunk.”

“I love you, King Billy.”

“I love you too, your majesty.”